60% of Popular Children's Candies Contain Dangerous Arsenic Levels

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Florida testing found SweeTarts, Snickers, Skittles, Kit Kat, Nerds, Sour Patch Kids, Twizzlers, Jolly Ranchers, Trolli, and Tootsie Roll among the worst offenders.

Nicolas Hulscher | GlobalResearch.ca

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Florida recently tested 46 popular candies heavily marketed to children. The results were sobering: **28 of the 46 products contained elevated levels of arsenic**, a known human carcinogen associated with increased risks of skin, bladder, lung, kidney, and liver cancer with repeated exposure over time. These were state-conducted analyses released by the Florida Department of Health under the Healthy Florida Firstinitiative.

Among the candies identified were many household names that routinely appear in lunchboxes, movie theaters, holiday bags, and Valentine's Day treats: **SweeTarts, Nerds, Sour Patch Kids, Skittles, Twizzlers, Jolly Ranchers, Trolli, Tootsie Roll, Snickers, and Kit Kat**. These products are not occasional treats; they are designed, packaged, and marketed for frequent consumption.

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EXPOSING FOOD TOXINS
Candy

The following shows approximate "safe" consumption amounts per year, based on developmental age, where arsenic was detected. Arsenic exposure beyond limits that are considered safe, can increase the risk of cancers, including lung, skin, kidney, and bladder.

* *Indicated candy marketed as a healthier option.*

Candy	Company	Brand	Arsenic Parts per Billion (PPB)	Safe Consumption Limit, Per Year *(approximate)* Child	Adult
	Ferrara Candy Company	Black Forest Gummy Bears	370	16 pieces *(if 1 piece is 3 grams)*	40 pieces *(if 1 piece is 3 grams)*
		Organic Black Forest Gummy Bears *	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Laffy Taffy Banana	480	4 pieces *(if 1 piece is 8.8 grams)*	9 ¾ pieces *(if 1 piece is 8.8 grams)*
		Laffy Taffy Cherry	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Nerds Grape	380	96 pieces *(if 1 piece is 0.5 grams)*	240 single pieces *(if 1 piece is 0.5 grams)*
		Nerds Strawberry	450	96 pieces *(if 1 piece is 0.5 grams)*	240 single pieces *(if 1 piece is 0.5 grams)*
		Nerds Gummy Cluster	500	24 pieces *(if 1 piece is 2 grams)*	60 pieces *(if 1 piece is 2 grams)*
		SweeTarts Original	400	48 pieces *(if 1 piece is 1.25 grams)*	120 pieces *(if 1 piece is 1.25 grams)*
		SweeTarts Rope	390	3 ropes *(if 1 rope is 12.5 grams)*	7 ½ ropes *(if 1 rope is 12.5 grams)*
		Trolli Sour Brite Crawlers	430	12 pieces *(if 1 piece is 3.8 grams)*	30 pieces *(if 1 piece is 3.8 grams)*
	The Hershey Company	Hershey's Milk Chocolate	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Hershey's Cookies 'N' Creme	280	1 ⅓ bars *(if 1 bar is 43 grams)*	3 bars *(if 1 bar is 43 grams)*
		Jolly Rancher Hard Candy Sour Apple	540	6 pieces *(if 1 piece is 8 grams)*	15 pieces *(if 1 piece is 8 grams)*
		Jolly Rancher Hard Candy Strawberry	320	6 pieces *(if 1 piece is 8 grams)*	15 pieces *(if 1 piece is 8 grams)*
		Reese's Peanut Butter Cups	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Whoppers	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Twizzlers Strawberry	500	4 pieces *(if 1 piece is 11 grams)*	9 ⅗ pieces *(if 1 piece is 11 grams)*
		Twizzlers Cherry	350	8 pieces *(if 1 piece is 5.8 grams)*	20 pieces *(if 1 piece is 5.8 grams)*
		Twizzlers Watermelon	510	18 pieces *(if 1 piece is 3 grams)*	45 pieces *(if 1 piece is 3 grams)*
	Nestlé	Kit Kat	230	2 ¾ pieces *(if 1 piece is 17 grams)*	6 pieces *(if 1 piece is 17 grams)*

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Candy	Company	Brand	Arsenic Parts per Billion (PPB)	Safe Consumption Limit, Per Year *(approximate)* Child	Adult
	Mars	3 Musketeers	240	2 ⅗ pieces *(if 1 piece is 5.7 grams)*	20 pieces *(if 1 piece is 5.7 grams)*
		M&M's	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Snickers	350	2 ⅘ of pieces *(if 1 piece is 9 grams)*	6 pieces *(if 1 piece is 9 grams)*
		Twix	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Milky Way	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Original Skittles	370	48 pieces *(if 1 piece is 1.04 grams)*	120 pieces *(if 1 piece is 1.04 grams)*
	Mondelēz International	Sour Patch Kids	470	36 pieces *(if 1 piece is 1.25 grams)*	90 pieces *(if 1 piece is 1.25 grams)*
		Sour Patch Kids Tropical	420	18 pieces *(if 1 piece is 2.5 grams)*	45 pieces *(if 1 piece is 2.5 grams)*
		Sour Patch Kids Watermelon	420	12 pieces *(if 1 piece is 3.6 grams)*	30 pieces *(if 1 piece is 3.6 grams)*
		Swedish Fish	220	8 pieces *(if 1 piece is 6 grams)*	20 pieces *(if 1 piece is 6 grams)*
	Tootsie Roll Industries	Dots	430	12 pieces *(if 1 piece is 3.7 grams)*	30 pieces *(if 1 piece is 3.7 grams)*
		Tootsie Fruit Chew Lime	570	8 pieces *(if 1 piece is 6.6 grams)*	20 pieces *(if 1 piece is 6.6 grams)*
		Tootsie Roll	380	8 pieces *(if 1 piece is 6.6 grams)*	20 pieces *(if 1 piece is 6.6 grams)*
		Tootsie Roll Vanilla	370	8 pieces *(if 1 piece is 7 grams)*	20 pieces *(if 1 piece is 7 grams)*
	Annie's	Organic Bunny Fruit Flavored Snacks Berry Patch *	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
	Smart Sweets	Smart Sweets Caramel *	240	1 bag *(if 1 bag is 45 grams)*	2 ⅔ bags *(if 1 bag is 45 grams)*
		Smart Sweets Red Twists *	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Smart Sweets Sweet Fish *	180	1 bag *(if 1 bag is 50 grams)*	2 ⅔ bags *(if 1 bag is 50 grams)*
	UNREAL	UNREAL Dark Chocolate Caramel Peanut Nougat Bar *	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		UNREAL Dark Chocolate Coconut Bar *	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		UNREAL Dark Chocolate Peanut Butter Cup *	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
	Yum Earth	Yum Earth Organic Chewys *	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Yum Earth Choco Yums Chocolate Candies *	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Yum Earth Organic Giggles *	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Yum Earth Gummy Bears *	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*
		Yum Earth Organic Lollipops *	-	*risk not identified*	*risk not identified*

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What makes the findings especially concerning is the "safe" consumption limits calculated specifically for children, based on the detected arsenic levels. According to Florida DOH, a child could safely consume no more than:

- **Nerds (Grape or Strawberry): 96 pieces per year**
- **SweeTarts Original: 48 pieces per year**
- **Sour Patch Kids: 36 pieces per year**
- **Skittles: 48 pieces per year**
- **Trolli Sour Brite Crawlers: 12 pieces per year**
- **Jolly Ranchers (Sour Apple or Strawberry): 6 pieces per year**
- **Twizzlers Strawberry: 4 pieces per year**
- **Tootsie Roll: 8 pieces per year**
- **Kit Kat: approximately 2½ pieces per year**
- **Snickers: approximately 2% of a standard bar per year (child)**

These limits are incompatible with normal consumption. A single box of Nerds can contain 2,000 to 8,000 pieces, making it impossible for children to remain within what the state itself considers safe. The issue is not an occasional treat, but repeated exposure over years, which is precisely how arsenic causes long-term harm.

The findings raise a deeply troubling possibility: for decades, children may have been routinely exposed to arsenic through candies widely assumed to be safe, without meaningful oversight or disclosure. This warrants immediate concern beyond Florida. Every state should replicate this testing without delay. In the meantime, parents should take these results seriously and avoid or strictly limit candies shown to contain elevated arsenic.

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